

Local Health Officer Survey

June 2006

The purpose of this survey is to obtain basic demographic data, information on existing roles and responsibilities and ideas for improving local health officer services across Maine. All data collected will be compiled in aggregate form and will be kept confidential.

1. Name of your county: **196 responses received**

2. Who do you report to in your community? (checkmark as many options below as appropriate)

112	selectmen
72	town manager
14	townspeople
9	no one
25	other (see attached summary)

3a. How many hours do you work a month as a local health officer?

152	less than 5 hrs.
8	5-10 hours
3	10-20 hours
1	20-30 hours
6	30-40 hours

3b. How many years have you been working in this position? **8**

4. Are you paid as a local health officer position?

91	yes	91	no
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If yes, please checkmark as many of the following that apply to you:

16	hourly wage
54	salary from municipality
-	grant funded
20	other funding (see attached summary)

5. Have you had any contact with any of the following officials in the past year?

(checkmark as many options below as appropriate)

127	local town selectmen	48	county EMA staff
78	local town manager	14	Maine American Red Cross staff
108	local code enforcement officer	76	local or county law enforcement officers
90	local animal control officer	18	a state regional epidemiologist
105	local fire department staff	48	local emergency management officer
57	local ambulance/rescue service staff	10	public housing staff
22	local community health center staff		Other State Agencies (see attached summary)
33	local hospital staff		
38	Maine Center for Disease Control staff (formerly called Bureau of Health)		

6a. Have you completed any health certification programs?

47	yes	136	no
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If yes, please indicate on what certifications and during what year? (see attached summary)

6b. Have you ever attended any training in connection with your duties as a local health officer?

65	yes	121	no
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If yes, please indicate on what topics and during what years? (see attached summary)

7. Have you ever participated in a local or county emergency preparedness exercise?

53	yes	132	no
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If yes, please list when and who sponsored the exercise? (see attached summary)

8. All the services listed below are from Maine Local Health Officer statutes. As a Local Health Officer (LHO), please checkmark each of the following services you provide or oversee in your community(s), checkmark whether a service should remain in LHO Statute and write in any recommended changes or transfer of duties to another person. (Me DHHS refers to Maine Dept. of Health and Human Services, formerly known as the Maine Dept. of Human Services.)

Local Health Officer Services Currently in Maine Statute	YES, I Provide	Keep in LHO Statute	Eliminate From LHO Statute	Transfer this service to another official (e.g. other local official – code enforcement officer, fire chief, regional or state government person, etc. - please list other officials)
a. Reporting diseases to ME DHHS (e.g. Rabies, W.Nile,)	73	67	29	
b. Receive & examine complaints concerning nuisance dangerous to life & health	129	76	7	
c. Enforce ME DHHS and local health ordinances	98	65	16	
d. Abate malfunctioning sewage systems	54	33	62	
e. Inspect, give notice, enforce unsafe dwellings	85	50	49	
f. Assist in protecting drinking water sources	59	45	38	
g. Inspect & evaluate public bathing beaches	33	40	34	
h. Respond to child, adult, or elder abuse or neglect	61	44	39	
i. Respond to offensive smells, substances, pollution	90	57	33	
j. Respond to discarded motor vehicles	51	24	68	
k. Respond to landlord/tenant issues	67	36	52	
l. Assist inspections of restaurants/convenience stores	36	33	49	
m. Inspect community mausoleums/burial structures	9	22	60	
n. Organize local immunization or free clinic	36	43	39	
o. Establish temporary local health care facility in response to a public health emergency	28	47	37	
p. Enforce state laws on improper disposal of waste	65	34	53	
q. Abate & remove an unlicensed internal combustion or steam engine	6	8	79	
r. Remove & euthanize undomesticated animal or wolf hybrid	3	8	100	
s. Give notice & fine owner of dead horse, cow, sheep, hog, fowl or domestic animal	18	23	76	
t. Oversee browntail moth removal	11	14	71	
u. Oversee removal of diseased inmate at local jail	2	12	75	
v. Apply for citizen to be admitted to mental hospital	8	17	74	
w. Petition for appointment of guardian/conservator	8	17	69	
x. Serve on citizen advisory committee for siting local waste disposal facility	21	33	43	
y. Respond to public health issues at local nursing home or senior centers	15	42	40	
z. Inspect local funeral home body preparation room	5	12	71	

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9. Do you think the Maine Local Health Officer system should stay the same or be changed?
112 yes, (change it) **51** no, (keep it the same)

If you checkmarked yes, go to question 10. If you selected no, go directly to question 12.

10. Place a checkmark next to one or more of the following potential changes to the Local Health Officer system:

- 41** a. Assign the Local Health Officer functions to other local existing positions (e.g. Code enforcement Officer, Fire Chief etc.)
- 47** b. Replace Local Health Officers with Regional Health Officers
- 55** c. Create Regional Health Officers and maintain Local Health Officers, splitting the duties between the two
- 20** d. Eliminate Local Health Officers
- e. Other ([see attached summary](#))

If you checkmarked either 10b or 10c above, go to question 11. If not, go directly to question 12.

11. What services do you think a regional health officer should provide? (checkmark as many as you think are appropriate and write in any additional duties/roles)

- 83** training
- 80** technical assistance
- 70** medical expertise
- 84** liaison to state agencies
- 82** facilitator for local health officer group within a county
- 33** current statutory functions (choose from table in Question 8 or any other duties you provide)
- Other ([see attached summary](#))

12. What would help you most, to increase the effectiveness of your job as a local health officer?

[See attached summary](#)